

Report 6, 8th of August 1999

## The graves, part 2

**Grave 32** consisted of a well-laid stone frame, buried rather deep in the ground. On top of the skeleton, there was a loose stone packing and dark soil. After taking away the stones, two skeletons were discovered. One was of a female, some 155-cm long, and as far as we could see rather young. The other skeleton was of a young child, maybe 1-2 years old. It looks as if the child had been placed close to the woman's head. The woman had an animal head brooch at her left shoulder of the same kind as in grave 14.

The dead lay on her back with right arm across her breast and the left arm out from the body. The legs were tight together. At her left shoulder (see photo below) she had an animal head brooch made of bronze from the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century. Photo D. Carlsson.



Hultrika (above) started the excavation of grave 32, and Mikke Brännström, Alexander Andreeff (to the left) and Angela Helmer continued and finished the work. Photo D. Carlsson



**Grave 41** was of the same kind as the other graves, meaning that the deceased was buried in a hole in the ground, and covered with a stone packing. The grave was orientated in a northeast-southwest orientation. Even this grave contained a woman, to judge from the artefacts that she had with her. Around her neck, about 10 beads were found, mostly made of amber. There were also some bronze spirals of a kind that is rather common in the Baltic area East of Gotland. She also had two dress pins made of bronze, placed on each side of the head. They have probably been used to hold the necklace. A very well preserved comb made of bone was found at her chest. It had unusual long teeth, and was nicely decorated with lines.

In direct connection to grave 41, the excavators found traces of another person, obviously buried directly in the gravel without any stone covering (grave 23). It seems as if this grave has been destroyed when grave 41 was constructed. Among the bones, the excavators found a well preserved box brooch of a typical gotlandic type, made of bronze and decorated all over with animal style figures.

To the right, Carina is making a drawing of the grave. Below is the comb from grave 41. Photo Dan Carlsson



By now we know that there are two different horizons of graves in this grave-field.

There is an older part with graves mainly from the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Most of the persons in these graves have

been put into the gravel without any kind of stone packing. They are many times buried very shallow, which has meant that many of them are destroyed by later activities, not at least in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, when

they buried their dead under stone packings. One of these graves was destroyed when grave number 41 was made. Petra (to the right) is holding the under jaw of a female from one of these destroyed graves. The box brooch above also belonged to this woman. Photo D. Carlsson



**Grave 53** was discovered in the eastern part of our trench, just outside the big stone circle, and partly outside our trench. Shortage of time meant that we decided not to take up the grave, but just to register the position of the skeleton.

All together, the graves from this year's excavation supplement very much the results from our earlier excavations. Most of the graves investigated so far seem to contain women, even if we have found some men. A very interesting picture evolves around the huge stone circle. It looks as if it is a kind of central grave to the area, both by its size and form. But also because all the graves around this central grave seems to be orientated in a way to enclose the grave. So, the question arises; who is the person buried in this round and extensive grave? Sorry to say, we have to wait until next summer to get an answer to that question, while this summer's excavation is almost finished.



Grave number 53. The grave is about one metre below the surface, and to a large part outside our trench, which can be seen above. Above, Angela is working on the skeleton.